Gone

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Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Major Character Death
Categories:	F/M, Gen
Fandoms:	Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood & Manga, Fullmetal Alchemist - All Media Types
Relationships:	Riza Hawkeye/Roy Mustang, Izumi Curtis/Sig Curtis, I don't know if I'll have pairings but if I do it'll either be edling or edwin, I'm really not in the mood to focus on that tho
Characters:	Edward Elric, Pinako Rockbell, Winry Rockbell, Izumi Curtis, Roy Mustang, Riza Hawkeye, Ling Yao, Lan Fan
Additional Tags:	Character Death, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, Canonical Character Death, Implied/Referenced Character Death, Self-Harm, Cutting, Scratching, Nightmares, Anxiety, Implied/Referenced Suicide, Suicide Attempt, Suicidal Thoughts, Thought Projection, venting but tbh it's really not helping at all, I'm Sorry, Self-Doubt, Self-Esteem Issues, Self-Blame, a lot of crying, because I'm a huge mess right now
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Gone

by karinakamichi

Summary

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In which Al is too weak to survive when he comes back from the gate, and Ed just has to grow to accept it.

I am entirely writing this from my own heart and my own feelings, because I just lost my grandmother yesterday from a stroke(before finding out my other grandma is dead too) and it hurts so fucking bad right now. So please, please just be nice, maybe I'm selfish for writing out my feelings about something this serious through a fanfiction, but I need to write about it in some way or another because I feel on the verge of doing something reckless. This will contain extreme trigger warnings such a self-harm and suicidal themes, so I hope you will bear that in mind as you read it. Thank you so much.

Chapter 1

Story: Gone, Chapter 1

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Death was an inevitable part of life. Ed knew that. He'd learned it with both the deaths of his mother and later his father, alongside Greed and all the other people he'd lost. But that didn't stop it from hurting when Al's human body was too weakened to go on living, and Al's eyes slipped into unconsciousness. And nothing aside from Trisha's death could even remotely compare to what he was feeling since losing Al.

Every part of him felt drained. Every part of him hurt. Part of him just wanted to deny it was *real,* because Alphonse was just there with him.

He was *just there. In the gate he had even smiled at him,* and then he was *gone, just like that* . It was all so sudden and he didn't know how to process it.

He kept wondering that maybe if he had done something different, maybe if they had got him help sooner, maybe if everybody had moved faster, and he hadn't panicked or took time to even question what to do, then it would have turned out differently, maybe they could have helped him. But in the end, Al was dead and there was nothing he could do.

Over and over again, he could remember himself repeatedly calling out and saying "Hang on, Al. Stay with us, we're going to get you help."

Over and over again , Mei's sobs echoed in his head like a *mantra* , and the lifeless look in Alphonse's eyes haunted him to the point of insanity. The sight and sound of Alphonse's armor going limp kept playing games with his psyche, as he remembered all the hopes for the future Alphonse had; the things he planned on doing when he got his body back, and even the journal he had been writing in, which he'd read over at least a hundred times by now.

A certain part told him that being stuck in a suit of armor on a thin battery or a potentially vegetative state wasn't a much better fate, and maybe he was selfish for desiring that for his brother over this, and he knew it was only a matter of time at the rate things were going but he didn't care. He just wanted to *talk to him again, to tell him he loved him* . He just wanted to *hear him again* , just once more. He missed him, so badly it hurt.

After that he only felt nausea as he looked down upon his flesh arm which Alphonse had sacrificed his armor and inevitably his life for.

Truth was, it wasn't even really the big things that Edward missed. No, unironically it was every small thing that served as an all too fresh reminder of his dead brother. Whether it be every cat he saw pass by him, or something as stew or milk. He couldn't stomach any of it, no matter how much Winry or Pinako tried to convince him to eat that night.

He could barely even bring himself to speak it was so exhausting . He would die to hear his brother make some witty remark about him being short or needing to drink his milk again. He would die to hug and hold him in his arms again, to lean against him even if it *was* only him in his armor.

Next with that came anger.

He was angry at Father for pushing them into that situation, angry at God for being so cruel, angry at life because death was a part of it, angry at the doctors for choosing that for him, and, above all, angry at himself, for causing everything in the first place, by pressuring Al into committing human transmutation to bring their mother back.

Worst of all, he didn't even get to say goodbye. Al was too weakened and completely unresponsive by the time they reached they hospital, by the time he came out of the gate even, and in the end, against Ed's wishes and protests, the doctors decided to pull the plugs.

They told him that Alphonse wouldn't want to be kept like that, but who were they to decide that?! Who the hell gave them any right or say so over what Alphonse wanted. Only *he* knew what Alphonse wanted! Alphonse wanted to live, to press forward, even if he did have to go through something like that. He wouldn't just give up!

"That idiot…! He wasn't supposed to die on me like this... Those incompetent doctors don't even know what the hell they're saying. They just pulled the plugs because they didn't want to deal with him. He could have lived. *He could have lived* ... It isn't fair, none of this is fair…" He found himself cursing beneath his breath a couple days after Alphonse had died. He ripped the skin of his new arm to pieces, unable to hold himself back from sobbing against the bathtub wall. "...And now even my bastard father's gone too… Damn it...!"

His head was pounding, but he couldn't stop his tears from falling. He really missed him, so fucking bad. His brain's hardwiring kept expecting to hear his brother's voice again, to find out it was all just some bad dream, but he knew Alphonse would never be coming back and that Human transmutation was out of the question, especially since he didn't have his alchemy any more.

What did any of their efforts to get his body back even matter if it was just going to end up like this...?

What was it even all for…? Did it really not amount to anything in the end…?

After a long moment of crying, he could only bring himself to choke out one thing, not even caring if it sounded melodramatic:

"I just want to be with him… Alphonse… I miss him so much, dammit, I just want to die… *Alphonse...* "

Unknown to him, Winry and Pinako heard every word of what he said from the other side of the door. Although they didn't know he was hurting himself, it still concerned them greatly.

It wasn't like they didn't understand what he was feeling. After all, Al was like family to them, and they too had faced other loses like this in the past just as Ed had. But out of all three of them, Ed was easily the closest to Al. His pain was entirely reasonable, and more than anything they wanted to be there for him, but there was only so much they could do for him without causing him even more pain.

It was then that Winry got an idea. Izumi was almost like a mother to Ed and Al, even more than their teacher, as she had been there for them throughout a large portion of their childhood, taught them Alchemy, even let them live with her. Maybe she would know what to do or how to be there for Ed in such a time as this.

A/N: I don't know where I'm going with this, or if I'll complete it, but this is a very vulnerable time for me. It seems like everything is setting me off right now and making me break down in tears, so I wrote this entirely from the heart. I hope you all will stick with me if I can bring myself to continue it...

Chapter 2

Story: Gone, Chapter 2

Disclaimer: I don't own FMA.

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If there was anything that Winry knew, it was that she couldn't stand seeing Ed suffering so much. Losing Alphonse was enough of a blow, but she couldn't stand the thought of losing Ed too.

She wanted to hug him, or offer some kind of support, to show him she understood and that she was there for him, but any time she tried to tell him not to blame himself or that Alphonse wouldn't want him to be this distraught over it, he either outright pushed her away or barely responded at all. Nothing was working, and he'd been like this for days now.

It wasn't like she couldn't relate, because she too had fallen to pieces on multiple occasions since finding out about Al, but she knew just how important the brothers were to each other.

Once in a blue moon, Ed would force himself to smile and laugh at some things, but it clearly didn't meet his eyes or heart. Other times, the dead look in his eyes reminded her of back right after Ed and Al failed to bring their mother back.

His mental state was extremely fragile right now, as it almost seemed like *anything* had the potential to send him into a state of either detachment or more frequently uncontrollable sobbing. She wasn't used to seeing him like this and due to the fact that she herself was also trying to grieve, it only made it that much harder for her to witness.

As she held the phone in her hand and listened to it ring, she tried her best to tune out the sounds of crying she could hear from the other room. Tears began well up in her own eyes, which she immediately wiped way.

"Hello, this is Curtis Meats. Izumi speaking." A soft voice suddenly sounded from the other end.

Winry had almost expected Sig to pick up, but this worked out perfectly.

"Hi, Mrs. Izumi, this is Winry, I was wanting to talk to you for a bit if that's okay… It's about Ed." Winry asked in a low voice, hoping Ed couldn't hear her.

"Oh, how is he doing? I've been worried about him ever since I found out, especially with the wake being tomorrow." Izumi inquired.

"...That's actually why I called…" Winry said, her shoulders slumping a bit. "He hasn't eaten anything since coming home... It seems like every little thing is upsetting him right now, and some of the things he's been saying is really worrying me, so I was wondering if you could possibly talk him when you get a chance, maybe even take him back to Dublith with you for a while until he's able to get back on his feet. I have to go back to Rush Valley again once the funeral is over, but I want somebody to be there for him... I'm afraid he's going to hurt himself or something if nobody's watching over him and I know Granny can't, not at her age… But I'd understand if it's too much to ask."

"No, it's fine, I understand. I'll talk to him tomorrow, but I want you to keep an eye on him in the meantime."

"...Right… Thank you so much, Mrs. Izumi..." Winry sniffed, rubbing her eyes.

"Don't mention it… Take care of yourself, okay?"

"...Mn. I will."

...

Al's wake wasn't by any means a pleasant one. To begin with, seeing a dead loved one was never easy. And on top of that, there were a few distant relatives who Ed either had little or no recognition of, that stepped in momentarily to pay their respects, but didn't stay long, which only filled Ed with a certain level of bitterness he logically knew wasn't rational.

Al really looked like he was asleep, but the lack of rise and fall in his chest and the permanent unmoving expression plastered on his face reminded Ed all too quickly of the reality. For the longest time, ignoring his surroundings, he just stood there, staring down at his brother's body, which had been dressed in new and clean clothing, his arms and hands loosely draped over his stomach.

Due to Ed's emotional state, Izumi and Winry had taken over picking out clothes for and dressing Al as well as brushing his hair and everything else, so this was Ed's first time seeing him since he died.

He had expected Al's face to be ghostly white, considering how long it had been, but the ones in charge of the embalming had done an amazing job at covering it up with make-up, because it was hard to even notice, except in some spots like the tips of his fingers or on small portions of his face. There were also some noticeable bruises here and there.

Reaching up, he hesitantly took ahold of Al's hand. It was so cold.

Tears once again welled up in Ed's eyes, as the fact of the matter struck him through the heart like bricks. He was just there and then he was *gone* . This couldn't be real. This wasn't him. *No. It was, but none of this felt right at all. They had had so many hopes of what he was going to do once he got his body back, so why did this have to-*

"Al…" he choked out, still unable to truly deny it, because he had faced this reality with his mother in the past. He knew that there was no way around it. "...You always told me to live on and survive… But I... I can't… Not without you, Al… I can't go on without you, not now… It was just too sudden… I miss you so much…"

He allowed himself to rest his head onto Al's chest, his stifled sobs wracking his shoulders.

Somewhere in his state of awareness, he felt a gentle and familar hand stroking his back, but just ignored it in the end, not even having the mental capacity or energy to respond.

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A/N: Not a lot but something I guess...

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